

REJECT
Reduce
Reuse



Recycle More. Waste Less.

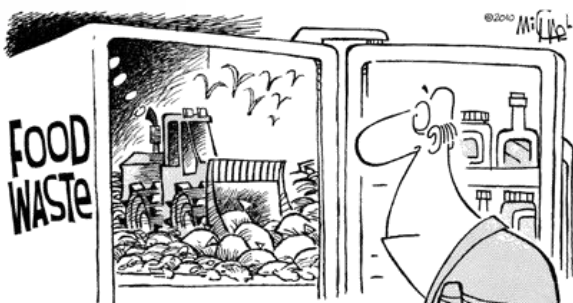
Resolving to Reduce Food Waste

Ever have perfectly good intentions to eat up all the leftovers from a meal...except that you later find yourself questioning the contents of all those containers you tucked into the fridge? You might find yourself wondering how old that stew is, unable to remember what day the original meal was cooked. And how long can leftovers really be expected to stay edible? Perhaps you are just not in the mood for tuna casserole...again. Or, if a container of food lurks long enough on the back of the shelf, you might not even know what's inside it anymore!

For those reasons and more, we throw away food. A lot of food. The University of Arizona conducted a study and found that U.S. households dump \$43 billion worth of food a year, or about 14 percent of what they buy. And that doesn't include plate scrapings, just outright waste! Here are some additional facts from the same research:

- 15 percent of what is thrown out includes products still within their expiration date but never opened.
- Managing the disposal of food waste costs the U.S. \$1 billion a year.
- Rotting food then releases methane, a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.
- Reducing food waste would directly reduce adverse environmental impacts through decreased landfill use and reducing farm soil depletion and applications of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.

Environmental, moral or other reasons aside, reducing food waste just makes good sense for household economics. According to the study, an average family of four tosses out more than \$590 per year in meat, fruits, vegetables and grain products alone. The main reasons for throwing away food can probably be grouped in to two main categories: "cooking or preparing too much" or "not using food in time". So, what is an eco-minded-but-busy household to do when it comes to better managing the contents of their fridge and pantry? **Read on to the next page for some time-tested tips as well as new tools available for modern families.**



More than 30 million tons of food was dumped in landfills in 2009, making food by far the most abundant material disposed of by weight, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

This amounts to roughly 200 pounds a year for every man, woman and child in the United States.

Tips for Reducing Food Waste

- ♦ **Keep a grease pencil by the fridge!** A grease pencil, or china marker, is an indispensable tool for keeping track of perishable food. A kitchen well-stocked with reusable containers needs a simple way for labeling the contents inside. Enter the erasable, multi-surface marker. Every time you stash a dish in the fridge, take a moment to scrawl the date and label what's inside, thus ending the mystery-leftovers guessing game. The writing comes off when the container is washed.
- ♦ **"Best Before..." doesn't mean it has gone bad!** These dates refer to *peak quality* rather than food safety. When a "best before" date has passed, the food won't be unsafe but might begin to lose some flavor or change texture. One exception is eggs – never eat eggs after the 'best before' date. **Even "Use-by" dates usually refer to best quality and are not safety dates.** But even if the date expires during home storage, a product should be safe, wholesome and of good quality if handled properly and kept at 40 °F or below. (Information source: USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service website)
- ♦ **Freeze it to keep it!** To extend the life of food beyond "Best Before" or "Use by" dates, simply freeze it on or before the date. Then you can thaw later (using proper defrosting practices) and use within a day.
- ♦ **Know your fridge temperature.** For proper food storage, a fridge should stay between 35 and 40 degrees. An inexpensive [thermometer](#) on the top shelf can help keep your foods fresher longer.
- ♦ **Set aside a section for "priority" food.** Take five minutes once a week to rummage through the fridge and see what is nearing its use-by date. Move those items to a highly visible place where they can be easily accessed. Motivate fridge-browsing snackers and chefs by posting a note that encourages them to help "rescue" foods in the priority area.

Tech for Reducing Food Waste

- * www.supercook.com is an amazing invention that specializes in turning whatever you have in the fridge and cupboard into a great meal on the table. Simply enter the ingredients you are looking to use up; as you enter information, links to lots of different recipes that use up your ingredients simultaneously appear on screen.
- * www.lovefoodhatewaste.com is a British website that has helpful information no matter where you live, shop and cook. An online "perfect portions" planner lets users select what vegetables and meats you want to prepare and enter information for whom you'll be cooking; the handy tool then calculates exactly how much of each food will be needed. There are also tools for party planning, ready-made meal plans, recipes and tips for saving money at the store.

... But wait, there's more! Now this site has released a **mobile app** for [Android](#) and [iPhone](#) devices that provides portion information on-the-go, so shoppers never have to buy more than they need. Other features include a unique food waste 'blender' that asks users to enter the leftover ingredients they have on hand and whizzes up suggested recipes.
- * www.greeneggshopper.com is an app for iPod/iPhone products that keeps track of items you purchase, along with their prices and expiration dates. On the down side, users have to manually enter the prices and use-by dates, but the info can be saved and transferred to later shopping lists. Once the data is uploaded, the app assists you in making grocery lists and crossing items off as you shop. Best of all, you can see what you already have that will soon be expiring by perusing the "Use Me Now" list and plan/act accordingly. Lastly, The Green Egg also helps track your grocery expenditures.

A Little Extra Help

www.TheScramble.com Even folks with great, green intentions may simply not have the time or savvy to pull off well-planned, waste-free meals every day in time to feed a hungry family. That's where [The Six O' Clock Scramble](#) comes in! Each week this low cost, local service will email you five family-friendly dinner plans along with a well organized shopping list. Their goal? To have you eating healthy meals, prepped in 30 minutes or less. And because you'll shop for only what is actually needed for the week, you also end up with less waste!



Compost Happens! (And so do our fun, free classes to get you started!)

OK, so you've done everything you can to reduce the amount of food waste your household produces...but, inevitably, there are still a few spears of uneaten broccoli, or a cold pile of leftover mashed potatoes that no one wants. Or maybe you know a sandwich eater who refuses crusts. How can you turn these and other over-ripe discards into something useful? Not by culinary magic but by COMPOSTING!

If you've ever wondered how composting works or were curious but unsure of how to start...we're here to help! It's not smelly, it's not messy, it's simple and it can have a HUGE impact on reducing waste right here in our community! To encourage you to give it a try we're hosting another series of our popular, free how-to classes.

Did you know that having 1,000 residents actively composting can divert 600,000 pounds of organic waste from landfill disposal each year?

All who attend receive a composting information to take home and a ten-dollar-off coupon for a basic starter bin. Classes cover the biology and artistry of composting—with an emphasis on finding a system that will work for you! We discuss the pros and cons of various tumblers, piles and bins and provide a chance

for you to see some common composting units in person. In this way, class participants can devise the compost pile that best suits their schedule, yard and household's needs.

Classes are free but registration is required and spaces fill up, so sign up early! *Please note: youth attendance is allowed, but classes are geared to adult-level learning.*

Compost Class Dates:

- **Saturday April 28, 2–4pm**
- **Monday April 30, 2–4pm**
- **Friday May 4, 6–8pm**
- **Thursday May 10, 9:30–11:30am**
- **Friday May 18, 11am–1pm**
- **Saturday May 26, 2–4pm**



Classes are FREE. Maximum of 10 persons per session, so register early!

Register by calling 301-600-7405 or send email to: ACreamer@FrederickCountyMD.gov.



Don't Forget! When you're waiting for your own compost to be ready, ours is ready to go!

Available at our Reichs Ford Road composting facility (Monday-Saturday, 7am - 4:30pm) in bulk for \$8.50 per cubic yard or \$15 per ton. (During spring peak season, it is advisable to call to ensure product is in stock: 301-600-2955.

For more information, including a summary of laboratory analysis of Revive compost, [click here to visit the County website](#).

To see the Revive product brochure, [click here](#).

How Do I Dispose Of...?

Answers to some commonly asked questions!

If you have questions about how to dispose of a particular item, email your questions to ACreamer@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

Even if it isn't recyclable, we can let you know how to properly handle the waste that you have. Here are some items we've received questions about in the past:



Alkaline Batteries: *Standard, household batteries (such as D, AA, etc.) may be disposed of in your regular trash, as mercury was eliminated from these batteries in the 1990's. However, do not dispose of large quantities of alkaline batteries together in a group; used batteries are often not completely "dead." Grouping used batteries together can bring "live" batteries into contact with one another, creating safety risks.*

There are two local retailers who collect these types of batteries so that their metal wrappers can be recycled: MOM's Organic Market and the Common Market will take them for no charge.



Rechargeable Batteries: *These contain recyclable and/or potentially toxic chemicals and minerals and are accepted at our hazardous waste drop off event days, but may also be taken year round to Home Depot, Lowes, Best Buy or other stores offering recycling; visit Call2Recycle.org for more information and locations.*



Paint: *Oil and latex paints may also be placed with regular household trash—but they must be dried out first. Inexpensive commercial drying products for latex paint are available at paint and home improvement stores and can dry latex paint within a few minutes. You may also simply add mulch, shredded newspaper or kitty litter to any paint and leave the lid off until dried. Once paint is dried, it can be thrown out (you may need to inform your trash hauler that the product has been dried) or brought to the landfill for disposal.*



DVD, CD and BluRay Discs: *According to their website, any Best Buy retailer will take these discs for recycling, for no charge! More information is available on their website: www.BestBuy.com/recycle*

Residential Household Hazardous Waste:

Our next Household Hazardous Waste Drop Off event for Frederick County residents is scheduled for Saturday May 19, 2012, from 8am until 12pm at the Public Safety Training Facility, 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick (formerly listed as 8349 Reichs Ford Road). This event is free for disposal of residential waste, including:

- fluorescent bulbs (compact and tube)
- medicines (in original containers only)
- fuels (gasoline/kerosene)
- thinners and solvents
- stains and sealants
- pesticides/insecticides/fungicides
- household cleaners
- pool chemicals
- mercury thermometers
- photographic chemicals
- nickel-cadmium and NIMH batteries
- mothballs
- smoke Detectors

For more information visit: www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/hazwaste or call 301-600-2960.

Spotlight on a Local Business

In each issue we like to feature one local business that has successfully struck a balance between going green and earning green. If you know of a business that has taken innovative steps to recycle more and waste less, let us know and we may feature them in a future issue. This month we're visiting a scenic destination on the East side of the County...

Black Ankle Vineyards: Truly "Green" Grapes

Recycling might not be the first thing that comes to mind at the mention of Black Ankle Vineyards, but anyone who has visited their premises will tell you that this local business stands out not only for the quality of their product, but also for their chic, green style. Visitors to their tasting room, set in the scenic Frederick County countryside of Mt. Airy, are immediately captivated by the adobe-style architecture. Admiration of the building leads one to notice its solar panels and living roof; these are visitors' first clues to the extensive and unique green construction efforts that allow the building to blend in seamlessly with its surroundings.



Upon setting foot in the tasting room, the reuse of materials and commitment to recycling becomes tastefully obvious. The building itself was constructed using hay from the fields (there is a framed, cut-away section of the wall that exposes the natural building material). The cozy fireplace is made from the vineyard's own fieldstones. The trunk of one of the farm's maple trees was cut into thick slabs to create beautiful tabletops with rustic character. Sealed into the surface of the tasting bar are clippings from the grapevines themselves.

The owners of the vineyard are committed to more than just the aesthetics of green business. Rather than standard disposal, the spent grape skins from the wine making process are fed to the farms' livestock herd. Other materials are composted and applied to the farm's fields where all crops are grown sustainably. Even the tractors run on 100% biodiesel fuel. Corks from all wine bottles used on site are saved for local schools, or to be ground into cork flooring, and customers are encouraged to save their own corks and bring them to the winery for recycling. All that and the office and production areas recycle paper, glass and cardboard.

Black Ankle Vineyards is the culmination of a long-time dream of founders Ed Boyce and Sarah O'Herron. "From the outset we wanted Black Ankle to reflect not only our commitment to wine, but to the surrounding environment" said Sara. "Reusing and recycling the materials we have here on the farm honors that commitment and is a big part of who we are," she continued. The vineyard is located at 14463 Black Ankle Road, Mt. Airy and is open for wine tastings as well as available for facility rental. Call 301-829-3338 or visit blackankle.com for more information.

Wine Bottles and Other Things With Lids...

OK, corks can't be recycled at the curb. But wine bottles—or any kind of glass container—with

metal, screw-top lids can go in your big blue cart with the lid still on! For that matter, plastic bottles and tubs (such as salad dressing bottles or margarine tubs) should be placed in your cart with lids on as well. **The important thing is to only recycle EMPTY containers!** Rinsing them is helpful and may keep your cart tidy, but it isn't necessary to get that peanut butter jar spotlessly clean! **Empty it, rinse it, cap it and recycle it!**





**Frederick County
Department of
Solid Waste Management**

**9031 Reichs Ford Road
Frederick, MD 21704**

**Office of Recycling: 301-600-2960
E-mail: recycle@FrederickCountyMD.gov**

Recycling service questions and concerns, including requests for recycling carts, pick-up schedule inquiries, missed collections, etc., should be directed to your contracted service provider—Allied Waste Services—by calling 301-694-6498 or sending email to: frederickrecycles@republicservices.com

Upcoming Local Events and Dates to Remember

March 29–April 1

Tot Swap

9am - 9pm, Frederick Fairgrounds

Consignement events are a great way to reduce and reuse—and find some bargains too!

More information online at: www.totswap.net

April 21

Nature Fest

10-am - 2pm, Catoctin Creek Nature Center

Join this fun, spring celebration on Earth Day weekend! We'll be hosting a recycling display table with information, games and prizes. More info online at: catoctincreek.blogspot.com

May—June

Home Composting Classes

April—May, DSWM facilities at 9031 Reichs Ford Road

*Spring is the perfect time to go green! If you've never composted and would like to learn more, or would like to finesse your current composting skills, join us for a free class and visit our composting demonstration site. **Or, contact us to schedule a class for your group at your site!** See page 3 for more information on classes, dates and times.*

May 4—6

Kids' Closet Connection

9am - 9pm, Frederick Fairgrounds

Another great opportunity to reduce, reuse and recycle old clothes and toys!

More information online at: www.kidscloset.biz/sale?sale_id=17

May 19

Residential Household Hazardous Waste Drop Off Event

8am - 12pm, 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick (formerly listed as 8349 Reichs Ford Rd.)

Hazardous wastes are not accepted in Frederick County's recycling program, but should be kept out of the environment—and our landfill. Join our free drop off event for residential hazardous materials: More information is available on page 4 and on our website:

FrederickCountyMD.gov/hazwaste

May 28—June 2

Memorial Day Holiday to Affect Curbside Collection

*All DSWM facilities will be closed and there will be no curbside recycling collection on Monday, May 28. **ALL recycling collection days will shift one day later than their normal pick up for the remainder of the week.** (Refer to the chart below to see the shifted schedule.)*

Regular Collection Day	Holiday Week Collection Day
Monday May 28 →	Tuesday May 29
Tuesday May 29 →	Wednesday May 30
Wednesday May 30 →	Thursday May 31
Thursday May 31 →	Friday June 1
Friday June 1 →	Saturday June 2